The Chronicle and Index

OF THE UNITARIAN SOCIETY.

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The Rev. J. C. Street begs to acknowledge the receipt of the following subscriptions in aid of the gratuitous publication of the *Chronicle and Index*:—

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Further subscriptions are invited, and will be gladly acknowledged.

Our friends should now be looking forward to the Unitarian Anniversaries. They take place this year at Easter. The sermons at Rosemary Street and Moneyrea, on behalf of the Unitarian Society, will be preached by the Rev. Richard A. Armstrong, of Liverpool, who is sure to receive a hearty welcome from his numerous friends in Ireland. Representatives are looked for from England and Scotland, and there is no doubt we shall have interesting and inspiring gatherings. Full details will appear in our next issue.

The second Monthly Service for the Young in connection with Rosemary Street Sunday School was held on Sunday, February 6th. Mr. Bulmer conducted the devotional service, and the Rev. J. C. Street delivered an address on "Seeing and not Seeing." On the last Sunday in January, the school was favoured with a visit from its former superintendent, Mr. J. M. Darbishire, who was cordially welcomed by both teachers and scholars, and who delivered a very interesting address, in which he expressed his pleasure in being present, and at seeing signs of increased prosperity in the school. His visit was a pleasant incident which will not soon be forgotten.

The following were the subjects of discourses by the Rev. J. C. Street during the month of February:—

February 6th—*Morning*—The Lamp of God. *Evening*—Atheism.

February 13th—*Morning*—The Law of Love. *Evening*—Agnosticism.

February 20th—*Morning*—On the Death of Dr. Ritchie. *Evening*—Theism.

February 27th—*Morning*—The Life of Religion. *Evening*—Monotheism.

We call special attention to a new publication by Dr. E. Blackwell, advertised in the last number of our journal, entitled "The Purchase of Women: the Great Economic Blunder." It is issued as Part I., at the price of sixpence. Every one interested in the painful social problems which are pressing for solution should read this powerful statement and argument by Dr. Blackwell. Miss Blackwell's position is well taken. She argues as a scientific economist; but the glow of moral life is felt in every sentence of her argument. She recognizes the work done by men as reformers and workers in the cause of progress, but strongly feels and argues for the great work which women must do, so that the two sexes may take their full and fitting share in uplifting the race, and putting an end to the shameful and intolerable bondage which many women suffer, and the degradation which vice is entailing upon our race. We wish her, and "The Moral Reform Union," every success in their divine work.

THE meetings of the Mutual Improvement Society during the month of February were well attended and thoroughly enjoyable. The following subjects were treated with great ability:—

February 7th—Lecture: "A New Method of Acquiring French Pronunciation." By Rev. G. W. Bannister.

February 14th—Paper: "The First Unitarian Bishop of Hungary." By Professor G. Boros.

February 21st—Paper: "Good Grammar." By Mr. H. J. Aston, M.A.

February 28th—Lecture: A Short Study of William Blake." By Rev. F. Thomas.

Professor Boros' Paper was of singular interest in setting forth the story of the origin of Unitarianism in Transylvania. We understand the Lecture, with additions, will shortly be published.

WITH great regret we record the sudden death of Dr. W. B. Ritchie, J.P., one of the foremost leaders of free religious thought in Belfast, an active politician, a highly cultured scientific man, and a highly honoured citizen. The death of Dr. Ritchie, who was about seventy years of age, was a leading topic of conversation in Belfast, and on all sides deep sorrow is expressed at the removal of one who for such a lengthened period has occupied a prominent position in the community, and was held in such high esteem by all sects and parties. Very deep sympathy is also expressed with the members of his family. Long before the death of his father, the well-known Francis Ritchie, which occurred in February, 1864, the gentleman whose sudden demise has now taken place was well known to the residents, not only of Belfast, but of a large portion of the North of Ireland. He had been closely associated with his father in the carrying out of a number of important contracts, one of the most noteworthy being the Queen's Bridge, which was built under his personal supervision. Shortly after the completion of that undertaking, in 1844, the extensive chemical works were established in Ballymacarrett. Dr. Ritchie was a chemist of very high attainments. About a quarter of a century since he was elected Fellow of the Chemical Society, an honour to which he was well entitled. Chemistry was his favourite study, and in the laboratory, whether at the works in Ballymacarrett or adjoining his residence at The Grove, he invariably found real enjoyment in the pursuit of a science to which he was greatly devoted, and in connection with which he had successfully spent a large amount of time. We may here state that he also took a very deep interest in the mineralogy of the North of Ireland, and in connection with this subject had a most interesting collection of specimens. He was strongly in favour of developing the mineral resources of the country, and was a warm advocate of all legislation which would promote such industry in Ireland and wipe out all restrictive royalties. In his early days he studied in Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Dublin. We believe it was from Edinburgh University that he obtained his degree of M.D. As is well-known, he never practised in the ordinary sense as a medical man.

Dr. Ritchie, like his father, did much during his career for the benefit of Belfast, and was always anxious to join in any enterprise likely to be of any service to the town and district. He was a Liberal in politics, and throughout his career was ever found to be not only consistent with the principles of the party, but ready to come forward in their support. He was a faithful and earnest member of the Second Congregation, and a generous contributor to the various projects connected with the Unitarian Church. He was also one of the vice-presidents of the Royal Belfast Academical Institution, in the affairs of which establishment he took an active interest. For many years he held the commission of the peace, but rarely appeared before the public in his magisterial capacity. Dr. Ritchie was also for some time a member of the Belfast Harbour Board. As we have already stated, he was held in very high esteem. He was a gentleman of an exceedingly genial, courteous manner, who never courted publicity. Those who had the pleasure of his acquaintance found in him a staunch friend, ever ready to do a kindly, graceful act when the occasion pre-

sented itself, but who never made any display of the promptings of his large and generous heart. As is well known, he was the proprietor of an extensive quantity of land and house property in and around Belfast. In addition to being sagacious in business, he was also a man of much enterprise, and his qualities in both these respects have been again and again shown in connection with the various properties of which he was the owner on both sides of the Lagan.

Dr. Ritchie died suddenly in Liverpool on Tuesday. On Monday evening, in his usual health, he left Belfast for Liverpool in order to attend, on Tuesday, in Warrington, a meeting of the White Cross Company, in which he had been for many years an extensive shareholder. At three o'clock on Tuesday afternoon he left Warrington for Liverpool. It is supposed that after arriving at the Central Station about 3-30, he walked a short distance, and, feeling ill, asked for assistance. He was taken into a house not far from the station, and instantly expired. The nearest doctor was summoned without delay, but in the meantime life was extinct. The cause of death was failure of the heart's action. The remains were removed to Belfast for interment.

On Saturday morning, February 19th, at ten o'clock, his remains were borne from the family residence, The Grove, Belfast, and interred in the Borough Cemetery. A more thoroughly representative *cortege* never followed the remains of any man to the grave. Shortly before the hour appointed for the removal of the coffin, Rev. J. C. Street conducted services in the house. The coffin, which was literally covered with most beautiful wreaths, was then raised on the shoulders of a number of the employés and placed in the hearse, which proceeded through the grounds to York Road, and thence through York Street, Royal Avenue, Donegall Place, Grosvenor Road, to the Cemetery. The chief mourners were Thomas Hay Ritchie and W. B. Ritchie, sons of the deceased. The other relatives present were Mr. J. Ritchie, Mr. Barry, Dr. Osborne, and Mr. Patton.

A long line of carriages and cars extended the *cortége* over an immense distance. Amongst the cars was one representing the little newsboys, to whom the deceased was a generous friend. Along the route through which the funeral procession moved many of the shops had shutters on as a mark of respect for the deceased. Large numbers of working people assembled at different points and watched the funeral passing. When the Cemetery was reached the coffin was taken from the hearse and lowered into the grave.

Rev. J. C. Street, having read the services, said—It is difficult to be silent, and it is more difficult to speak, but on a day like this before this open grave to be silent would be almost a sin; yet to speak many words would seem to be utterly out of keeping with the man whose earthly remains we are now committing to the ground. We dare not be silent; for there has passed away from us, from this community, from this kingdom, one of the best and wisest and gentlest and kindest of men and of citizens, one who has left his impress on the life and industry, the prosperity, and the welfare of this great community; on the honour, the integrity, the manliness, the uprightness of its citizens; and on the charity, tolerance, and good-will which should prevail in this community. To be silent about the life of our friend Dr. Ritchie would, I think, be a sin. Dr. Ritchie had no ambition but the ambition to be good and to do good; he sought no honours from men, and his own life was an honourable one from beginning to end; having his own convictions clear and strong and distinct, he had the most profound respect for the convictions and judgments of other men. Though he himself took distinct positions upon matters concerning which men are divided, yet men of all parties and of all Churches recognised the catholic spirit, the large love, and the universal charity of Dr. Ritchie. He won golden opinions by the gentleness, the kindness, and the nobleness of his life; no one doubted him; his word was to be depended upon; his actions would always bear investigation; what he said and what he did were transparently pure and honourable. He has left behind him

in this community a memory which can never be forgotten. Not one man in this generation will fail to keep in memory the upright, the manly, the sincere, and humble character of Dr. Ritchie, whose remains we now consign to the grave. And yet to say so much even as I have done seems to be out of keeping with the gentle and retiring character of the Doctor. He could not bear words of praise to be spoken of him. He was willing to live in the quiet by-ways of the world, to do his deeds unostentatiously, and to live humbly and honourably before all men; he was not anxious to hear words of praise about himself at all, and it is only because I deem it right that those who are here to-day, representing different classes and different forms of religion, and different orders of politics—it is only because I deem it right to say these things in the presence of this diverse assembly that I venture to even speak at all. It is a gain to any community to have living among them a man like this; it is a gain to any Church to have among its members a man so simple and humble, so self-sacrificing, and so loving; it is a gain to any home to have at its head so noble, so true, so devoted a husband and father. You will join with me to-day in reverently now committing to the earth these earthly remains.

Prayer having been offered by Mr. Street, the grave was closed.

On Sunday, at the forenoon service in the Second Church, Rosemary Street, Rev. J. C. Street, in the course of his address, referred at some length to the great loss which they had all sustained in the death of Dr. Ritchie, and dwelt at some length on the many and estimable qualities of the deceased gentleman. Mr. Herbert Darbishire performed upon the organ the Dead March in "Saul," which he did also at the evening service, when, too, there was a large congregation.

We may mention that Dr. Ritchie was one of the founders of the Belfast Hospital for Sick Children, Queen Street, of which he was a trustee and generous benefactor, and with which he and each member of his family have always been closely identified.

OUTLINES OF LECTURES TO YOUNG MEN.

BY JAMES C. STREET.

HOW SHALL I FIGHT MY BATTLE? No. 3.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.—Having in my first Lecture defined what should be the aim of a young man's life, I pointed out in my second Lecture the sort of temptations which he would have to meet.

I considered these as they pressed with special force upon the Physical, the Mental, and the Spiritual nature. Under these divisions I brought before you the various snares and besetments which assail every young man as he goes forth to meet the world. I especially spoke of the following: The drinking customs, unchastity, undue physical pursuits, the plea that lying is needful in business, haste to grow rich—leading to gambling, dishonesty, and duplicity—fawning for favour, inducements to neglect mental culture, to neglect, or sneer at, or be hypocritical about, religion, falseness to conviction, and inducement to follow the multitude, to be and do like them, and so to sink the splendour and glory of true individuality.

These and many other temptations I declared you would have to meet. I have now to answer the third question you put to me—

HOW SHALL I FIGHT MY BATTLE?

This question is based upon the assumption that *your* life, and indeed *all* life, is a battle. Naturalists like Darwin, Huxley, and Wallace tell us that there is a *struggle for existence* itself—and no one can doubt that to obtain a *nobility of life* involves much conflict. "Battle's magnificently stern array" is not seen only when hosts are gathering in hostile forces, but even more grandly when a soul goes forth to do battle for its integrity. Shakespeare says—"Life's but a walking shadow; a poor player that struts and frets his hour upon the stage, and then is heard no more; it is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing." And Croly says—

> "What's life? At best a wandering breath;
> When saddest but a passing sigh;
> When happiest, but a summer wreath—
> A scent of roses floating by."

But these are most inadequate representations.

Life has been compared to many things, but surely none is more descriptive than that which calls it a battle. Paul revels in this figure of speech. He calls upon Timothy to "war a good warfare;" he urges him to "fight the good fight of faith;" he summons the Ephesians to "put on the whole armour of God;" and he rouses up all his followers to "quit them like men," and like "good soldiers." Dickens speaks wisely when he says—"This is a world on which the sun never rises but it looks upon a thousand bloodless battles that are some set-off against the miseries and wickedness of battlefields; and it is a world we need be careful how we libel, Heaven forgive us, for it is a world of sacred mysteries, and its Creator only knows what lies beneath the surface of His lightest image."

Unquestionably, young men, your life—if it is to be worth anything—*must be a battle.*

Do you remember that passage in Scott's "Lady of the Lake," when Fitz-James had expressed the wish to see Roderick Dhu and his band, and suddenly, at the whistle of his companion and guide, "every tuft of broom gave life to plaided warrior armed for strife?"

> "That whistle garrisoned the glen
> At once with full five hundred men,
> As if the yawning hill to heaven,
> A subterranean host had given."

Startled, the life-blood thrilling through him, Fitz-James

> "Mann'd himself with dauntless air,
> Returned the chief his haughty stare,
> His back against a rock he bore,
> And firmly placed his foot before;—
> 'Come one, come all! this rock shall fly
> From its firm base as soon as I!'"

This illustrates the *first* rule I would lay down. A young man to fight the battle of life must put his back firmly against strong principles, and his foot upon solid realities, and *must have something to fight for.*

Now I have set before you the grand aims of life, and what it is you ought to live for, and we have seen that these are worthy of your efforts. You have an embattled host of dangers and foes to meet. They stand up before you on all the waysides of life. They cannot be evaded. You must give an account of them, or they will crush and trample upon you.

No soldier will go to battle without being *well armed.*

Listen to Paul: "Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of praise; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the sword of God: praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance." This is what Pope means when he says—

> "True conscious honour is to feel no sin,
> He's arm'd without, that's innocent within."

But in addition to being *well armed*, a soldier must have a *brave spirit.*

There must be in him the stuff out of which heroes are made. A poltroon is sure to be beaten. Whoever may *win*, he must *lose.* In the battle of life a man must have the courage of his convictions and principles. He must be prepared without faltering to stand by them. You remember the story of the finding of the stiff upright figure of the Roman soldier at Pompeii, who, while the crowds hurried by him, flying for life, as the burning ashes were falling around, never moved, but stood at his post and died. And you have heard of the heroic deeds of pitmen, who, while the pit was on fire, and precious lives were in peril, voluntarily met death in order that they might save others. And some of us have not forgotten the story of the gun-cotton explosion at Stowmarket, where one of the proprietors, Mr. Prentice, braved and found death in order that he might restrict the limits of the explosion, and so save many of the lives of his workpeople. These stories, and a thousand others, illustrate the dauntlessness of manly heroism.

A soldier must *always be on his guard.* His

foes are treacherous and wily—like the Red Indians or the bushmen of Ashantee.

"Arm me with jealous care,
As in thy sight to live;
And O, thy servant, Lord, prepare,
A strict account to give." *(C. Wesley).*

Do you not know how, almost insensibly, a habit steals upon you? how a passion is nursed? how insidiously moral principles are sapped? Young men are in great danger. The allurements are so numerous, and the temptations are so beguiling. Keep a strict watch. Be always on guard.

"Thou who hast a vague foreboding
That a peril may be near,
Even when Nature smiles around thee,
And thy conscience holds thee clear—
Trust the warning—look before thee—
Angels may the mirror show,
Dimly still, but sent to guide thee,
We are wiser than we know." *(Mackay).*

The battle can only be won by those (1) who are *ready to fight*, (2) *ready to obey*, (3) *ready to die*. In this life-battle there must be no parleying with temptation. He who hesitates is lost. Every true soldier must be not only ready but eager for the fray. He must listen for the commander's word. He must study how battles are won. He may read of the soldiers' battle at Inkerman, of Sir Garnet Wolseley at Ashantee. He must cultivate self-reliance, and give perfect obedience to his commander. He must be willing to die, and go forth to the struggle as did Napoleon's Guards, and the soldiers of the Light Brigade in the Crimea.

Do not imagine that you are alone in the fight, or that you have no helpers and comrades, or that your battle is of small moment. The tide of battle rolls all around you. Grand souls are ready to cheer you on, and brave comrades to stand by your side; and your fight is part of the great battle which is raging between evil and goodness all the world over.

You will sometimes be worsted; a passion will rise and conquer you; a temptation will get the better of you; you will fall into some sin, some evil habit. Do not give up the fight; do not lose heart; do not despair. "Put your trust in God, and keep your powder dry," was the watchword of Cromwell. Plunge again into the conflict; never yield; you are surrounded with helpers; the armies of heaven fight with you; the prayers of your parents, the yearnings of all who love you, the hopes of those dearest to you are on your side; above all, God is fighting on your side; trust in Him; trust in yourselves; be of good courage, and you shall gain the victory.

Yours is a great moral warfare. Take these words of Whittier's to help you—

"Our fathers to their graves are gone;
Their strife is past, their triumph won;
But sterner trials wait the race
Which rise up in their honoured place—
A moral warfare of the crime
And folly of an evil time.

So let it be. In God's own might
We gird us for the coming fight.
And, strong in Him whose cause is ours,
In conflict with unholy powers,
We grasp the weapon He has given,—
The Light, and Truth, and Love of Heaven."

THE Treasurer of the Unitarian Society begs to acknowledge receipt of the following subscriptions for the year 1886:—

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SERVICES FOR MARCH.

BY REV. J. C. STREET.

PROGRAMME.

MARCH 6th—
Morning—Hymn of the City.
The Monthly Offertory will be made for Congregational purposes.
Evening—Atheism and the Popular Theology.

MARCH 13th—
Morning—The God of Nature.
Evening—Agnosticism and the Popular Theology.

MARCH 20th—
Morning—God our Strength.
Evening—Theism and the Popular Theology.

MARCH 27th—
Morning—All as God Wills.
Evening—Monotheism and the Popular Theology.

Service at 11-30 a.m. and 7 p.m.

The Offertory in support of worship is taken after every Service.

Rosemary Street Mutual Improvement Association.

FIFTEENTH SESSION, 1887.

The Committee have much pleasure in announcing the following

PROGRAMME FOR MARCH, 1887.

March 7—Paper: "Literary Fiction," .. ..Mons. Dubois.
„ 14—Paper: "Nationalisation of Land,"..Mr. W. J. Roche.
„ 21—Lecture: "Epitaphs," .. ..Rev. J. A. Kelly.
„ 28—Short Original Compositions.

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THE OBJECTS OF THE ASSOCIATION ARE

The intellectual and moral advancement of its members, and the furtherance of acquaintance and fellowship among them.

The Meetings are held on MONDAY EVENINGS at Eight o'clock, in the Rosemary Street Schools.

ADMISSION—To Lectures and Discussions—Members, Free; Non-Members, Sixpence each. To Papers, and Music and Readings—Free.

MEMBER'S SUBSCRIPTION—4s. per annum, which entitles to the use of the Library. Subscriptions for the Fifteenth Session are now due and should be paid to the Treasurer, DANIEL BULMER, 32 Queen Street, *as early as possible.*

The Library will be open at 1 p.m. on Sundays, and on every Monday Evening during the Session.

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